

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7-9 and 12 have been amended, and claims 2 and 13 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 3-12 and 14-15 are presently pending.

In view of such amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of the claims, as presently presented, are respectfully requested.

EXAMINER'S ACTION**The 35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections**

Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,763,376 ("Devine"). Claims 1 and 12, as amended, and claims 2-11 and 14-15 which depend directly or indirectly upon claims 1 or 12, clearly are patentable over Devine.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a service providing system including a service server connected to clients over a network and to application servers to which the clients transmit requests. Claim 1 requires that "the service server is connected to a first of the at least one application server over a first dedicated line having a first management IP address", and that the service server "upon receipt of a request by the client having a first IP address corresponding to the first management IP address, replaces the first IP address with the first management IP address". In addition, claim 1 requires that the service server forward "the request to the first application server over the first dedicated line" and that "the first application server returns a response to the service server based on the request". Further, claim 1 requires that "the service server, upon receipt of the response from the first application server, stores the response in a memory and returns the response." Claim 1 also requires that that "the service server, following the return of the response, deletes the response from the memory." (See

specification at page 8, lines 1-21 and FIG. 3 for support for claim amendment). Thus, the claimed invention advantageously uses the service server to isolate the application servers from the network, such that clients seeking access to the application servers via the network cannot access the application servers directly. Therefore, the application servers can be kept safe in the event a client or other party tries to illegally access the application servers with an intent to cause damage. (See specification at page 3, lines 14-22.)

Although Devine concerns an integrated customer interface for communication network management and describes relaying request from clients, after checking authorization level, to application servers (see Devine at Col. 17, lines 11-17), Devine does not teach or suggest connecting a service server to application servers using dedicated lines having respectively corresponding management IP addresses and having the service server replace an IP address associated with a request from a client with a management IP address corresponding to the dedicated line extending between the service server and the application server associated with the IP address of the request from the client. In addition, nowhere does Devine teach or suggest that a response to the request from the application server is transmitted to, and stored in a memory at, the service server, and then the service server returns the response to the client via the network and deletes the response from the memory. Further, it is respectfully submitted that the teachings in Devine would not motivate one skilled in the art to obtain the service providing system as required by claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over Devine.

In addition, amended independent claim 12, which claims a method having limitations corresponding to those set forth in system claim 1, is also patentable over

Devine for the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Further, claims 2-11 and 14-15, which depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 or 5, are also patentable over Devine for the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 1 and because of the further restrictions they add.

Withdrawal of the Section 102 rejections is, therefore, respectfully requested.

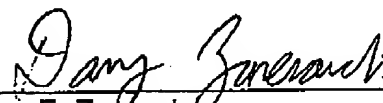
CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, it is believed that all of the claims, as presently presented, are patentable.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if it is believed that further amendment and/or discussion would help to advance the prosecution of the present application.

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 3-12 and 14-15 are, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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